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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Title:** Modern Writing: the Effect of Process on Product and Perception

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**Thesis:** Memoirs, which are normally the staple of post-war writing, have been temporarily replaced by online postings like blogs. While the blog has mistakenly been labeled as the method by which today's generation will tell their stories to the world, blogging will likely become a footnote in our history as the great memoirs of our current war are yet to come.

**Discussion:** Warriors throughout history have gone to war and had stories told about their accomplishments back home. The process of storytelling has evolved greatly from the days of oral tradition and the first "Romances" during the medieval period. Since the advent of the printer, popular themes of short stories and novels have been of heroic warriors. The result was pride and glory. Once America gained her independence and struggled through a bloody Civil War, the power of these written stories became a valuable resource. With the written personal history of the Civil War, the memoir became the standard for Americans to tell their experiences at war and inspire a nation. The early memoirs were filled with religious righteousness and vehement support for their sides' cause. As the memoir continues to represent our warriors in battle through the generations, there has been a slow shift in writing about God and Country to writing about the effect of war on man. As the memoirs developed after the Second World War, the theme shifted to man's participation in war and its effect on culture. In recent years, there has been a shift away from the traditional memoir towards a disjointed collection of correspondence through social networks, known as blogs. Although the blog has been useful in replacing the time delay of letters, it hasn't replaced the true digested opinion of man on his experiences at war.

**Conclusion:** Great novels and memoirs from our generation have yet to be written or have been written and not been published. The writings from the current war will be critical because just as the early writers of the feudal societies wrote about the great deeds of their knights, the relevance of writing at war is valuable in informing about successes and failures and for inspiring people, especially in today's global reach.

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Since World War I, servicemembers have used the memoir to describe their experiences at war. The memoir has been the standard for American audiences. The message of those memoirs and method of delivery have been the changing elements of each generation that has gone to war and come back to tell about it. Today's writers are still effective storytellers, but the advent of the Blog will have a lasting effect on modern writing. Today, good memoirs, which are normally the staple of post-war writing, have been temporarily replaced by online postings. Publishers are reluctant to publish well-polished memoirs, because there is too much of a time delay between events and availability on the shelves, a demand that has been satisfied by blogs. Given this situation, the blog has mistakenly been labeled as the method by which this generation will transmit its stories to the World. However, blogs are likely to become a footnote in our history as the great memoirs of our current war are yet to come.

### **Introduction of Topic**

Compared to conflicts of the past, a phenomenon in current American literature is the capability for writers of all abilities to use the speed of current multi-media to transfer their experiences from the "front" directly into living rooms in America. Prose and spots-in-time can be as easily transmitted as photos and video over the internet. This process has been refined through blogs, which are daily journals that are maintained and shared in cyberspace. Blogs have cornered the market for information at the front. There are more than 54.1 million blogs available and a 2006 Pew survey estimated that 39 percent of internet users read blogs.<sup>1</sup> Most of the information is unedited, raw, and sometimes shocking. With enough time spent searching through sites and entries, a reader can find useful information and occasionally an artistic entry, like poetry.<sup>2</sup> Since the American Revolution and the Civil War, American audiences have come

to expect immediate coverage of war and are interested in testimonials from those serving in harm's way. These testimonials have often come in the form of letters or tales told around campfires that eventually evolved into short stories and books. The current demand is happening at a time of saturation in the entertainment market by 24 hour news cycles and reality television. These have contributed to the dilemma of blogs versus books, or in some cases, blogs as books. Although these two things may seem to run together, ultimately they can lead to a change in the perception of current war writers. The change is due to the fact that blogging is taking up America's attention and keeping the better writers from being published. Frankly, as this paper will investigate further, the few published are those driven by controversy in an attempt to steal headlines, like Colby Buzzell's, *My War: Killing Time in Iraq*. This is a collection of blog entries about a recalled and disgruntled soldier in Iraq from his blogsite, "CBFTW," or "Colby Buzzell Fuck The War."<sup>3</sup> The result is a further departure from the writing style developed between World War I and Vietnam, which, today rarely appears in hardback, due to American publishers' unwillingness to compete with the volumes of material online.

I grew up reading classic memoirs about war and war experiences.<sup>4</sup> Most were written by the combatants themselves, while some fiction was also written in a memoir style. Although I have read a number of unit histories with a focus on British and American units, I believe that the single best example of non-fiction for World War II is *The Longest Day: June 6, 1944* (1959), which chronicles the events of D-Day through the stories of the "people: the men of the Allied forces, the enemy they fought and the civilians who were caught up in the bloody confusion of D Day."<sup>5</sup> My favorite fictitious memoir was the book that inspired me to write about war, *Refiners Fire* (1977), written by Mark Helprin, who served as both an Israeli Infantryman and Air Force pilot during the late 1960s. Although most of my favorites were

fiction, from these I felt part of the wars that generations before me have experienced. When it was my turn to go to war, I went well stocked with journals and pens. I didn't even take a camera. I planned to capture the essence of my experiences in writing. They could then be shared with my children, who would hopefully be inspired to share their gifts as well. What I didn't plan on doing was posting daily reports from the front. I personally believed that it would cheapen the process. To make a sports-analogy, sound bites from the winning team while still on the field are never good. To understand better what really happened, we wait for a player to reflect more deliberately on his own experiences. The art of description and reflection takes some mental digestion.

Returning from war in 2003, I was overwhelmed by the reporting from Iraq and noted a lack of writing or journal posting from servicemen. Although this phenomenon would soon change, we were letting the media single-handedly tell our story. I was compelled to write my memoir, *Back In Action* (2005), because I thought that the media were not painting an accurate picture of our actions as part of the Global War on Terror. Furthermore, I believed that America deserved a patriotic story from a soldier at war. In works of fiction, poetry, letters from the front, and in song, Americans have historically shown an ability to capture the attention of American audiences and make them part of the war experience. I finally had my chance to pay my country back and perhaps to inspire future leaders myself. Although I wrote a unique memoir about a man's love of his country and explained the desire to lead, always driven by a sense of selfless service, I merely wrote in the tradition of the great memoir writers who have preceded me in combat over the generations. Mine is merely an introduction to the great writing that will come with time.



## History of Writing on War

Some of the earliest writing about experiences at war was derived from the oral history of feudal society, and by the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> Century these stories started appearing in print, and are referred to in literary history as “romances.”<sup>6</sup> Often, these stories expressed direct reactions of the feudal society to war. These storytellers “were commoners who sang to the working man.”<sup>7</sup> Similar to the Greek use of mythology to inspire troops to support ongoing campaigns, these romances touched the hearts of the people. The conflicts themselves were not as important as the fact that “the ordinary man [transformed] into a heroic and enabled one.”<sup>8</sup> Often recorded directly from narratives, this writing “gave hope and spirit to every man - not just nobles.”<sup>9</sup> As in any war, feudal society needed to know that their lord was on a noble cause and their work supported a great cause. These legends are similar to Greek and Spartan writings, but became relevant and celebrated works for more than just the elite in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In the days following the Crusades, stories encouraged a generation of young men and boys to aspire to become military men, where “they focused on the imitation of the ideal hero.”<sup>10</sup> Therefore, writers gained the ability to establish the customs and behaviors of heroes in print, depicting heroic struggles as warriors faced overwhelming odds, but were willing to fight to the death for their people back home. This form of writing also set into print a set of Knightly rules that our warriors mirror today, and in the tradition of these tales, people expect us to maintain these Knightly virtues.<sup>11</sup> *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* may best exemplify the example of a warrior and what a reader should expect in a warrior’s tale, as it was most likely a story written by a commoner for commoners.<sup>12</sup> “The group whose good opinion the soldier is trying to acquire may be society as a whole, family or friends, the opposite sex, or his immediate colleagues, and this may vary through time.”<sup>13</sup>

What has not changed is the ability of any story about war to touch some element of culture, especially when glory and honor are involved. Stories from the Revolutionary War and the Civil War were commissioned to capture and inspire the spirit of brave men and women who believed in honor and duty. Letters from both these wars celebrated glory. As one Confederate wrote home, "The glory of duty done, the honor of integrity of principle."<sup>14</sup> Truly, the Civil War, in some small way, can be traced back to a deep Southern concern with honor like the Knights of the medieval times. According to Paul Robinson, author of *Military Honour and the Conduct of War* (2006), honor was often embedded in religious traditions and sacrifice for family and race. One example that Robinson gives is the large number of baptisms that occurred among Confederate soldiers.<sup>15</sup> But it was more than just the religious tradition; both sides of the Civil War were caught up in something similar to what historian John Lynn studied regarding the French "cult of the bayonet theory" during the Revolution of 1791-94.<sup>16</sup> He describes the phenomenon where war and war-like behavior becomes such an important part of daily life where, "Tactical doctrine, usually a concern only of professional officers and military theorists, was addressed in public forums."<sup>17</sup> Letters from both northern and southern women urged men to continue their struggle with honor and stories told among soldiers spoke of sacrifice and selfless acts of courage by a few that became battle cries for the many. In Giselle Roberts' book, *The Confederate Belle*, she focuses on Southern honor of the women as depicted in memoirs and letters, where "by drawing upon this powerful concept, young ladies ensured the basic preservation of an ideology of privilege."<sup>18</sup> This strength of letter writing for the Confederate Army, which was filled with Knightly virtues and expectation of personal honor, was an important "domestic endeavor such as knitting socks, sewing uniforms and preparing supplies, and especially through their letters to soldiers away at war, women became responsible for

equipping the army and maintaining morale.”<sup>19</sup> Even modern historians who write about Civil War battles cannot help but give emotional descriptions and cannot separate themselves from the heroism and acts of glory that painted the battlefields red with the blood from both Armies. Even the Pulitzer Prize winning author James McPherson, in *Battle Cry for Freedom* (1988), who has been criticized for intentionally showing bias against the Confederacy, cannot hide emotional and sympathetic portrayals of the Confederate will as they defended Atlanta during Sherman’s siege. In a Memorial Day speech of 1884, a Confederate from Macon, Georgia, conceded the moral point of war in a statement: “[in] the eventful years that mark the period [of War]... I have learned much that I did not previously know, have unlearned much that I had been wrongly taught, and have recalled many important historical facts that, in moments of passion or despair, were forgotten.”<sup>20</sup> It was this deep honor on both sides that helped motivate Civil War soldiers beyond a soldier’s normal will to fight.

Recording these events in Civil War literature came from all levels of command, from generals to foot soldiers, and “included little discussion of the social and political causes of the conflict or of the national good that resulted from it.”<sup>21</sup> These great authors defined their generation and captured for readers what modern war had become, and established a standard for writing about war. As these descriptions were written by the common man, they were written in terms that were easy to understand, which allowed everyone to be part of the experience. One popular example was “*Detailed Minutiae of a Soldier Life* (1882), “[where] Confederate veteran Carlton McCarthy described anticipation of confronting the enemy.”<sup>22</sup> The popularity of works like these was driven by the human interest in memoirs from the front, describing everything from everyday camp life to awaiting attacks. The popularity of these memoirs matched the soldiers’ desire to tell their story where “Civil War veterans found a culmination of manhood in

their memory of battle: a heroic identity that transcended ordinary ways of being a man.”<sup>23</sup> The most celebrated expression of the post-War period was the incredible success of *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895), in which “no other text in American Literature described the experience of battle in such complete emotional terms – terms that included the intimate depiction of death and the psychological compulsion of war.”<sup>24</sup> With a new tradition set, authors from the Spanish-American War continued “to express the national expression of masculinity – a material example of martial heroism in action.”<sup>25</sup> Before Ernest Hemingway defined masculinity for his generation, there was Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., who was a poet, orator and writer, and was injured three times during the Civil War, to include being shot through the chest at Ball’s Bluff.<sup>26</sup> Holmes described the value of battle:

That the joy of life is living is to put out all one’s powers as far as they will go; that the measure of power is obstacles overcome; to ride boldly at what is in front of you, be it fence or enemy; to pray, not for comfort but for combat; to keep the soldier’s faith against the doubts of civil life, more besetting and harder to overcome than all misgivings of the battle-field, and to remember that duty is not to be proved in the evil day, but then to be obeyed unquestioningly; to love glory more than temptations of wallowing ease, but to know one’s final judge and rival is oneself.<sup>27</sup>

This desire for masculinity inspired action in a generation to volunteer to fight, with 200,000 volunteers for war, in 1898, of which only 100,000 were put into service. American audiences continued their fascination with the lives of deployed soldiers and their experiences under fire, and less in the politics of war, setting a standard for generations of writers to come beyond the Spanish American War.

Beyond letters, stories and the early dawning of the battle narrative, an awakening out of European Romanticism’s poetic narratives brought a new way to record battle. “While literature would retain its importance as a field for the representation and articulation of cultural identity and difference, the emphasis would be increasingly shifted to the novel and particularly the realist novel of development.”<sup>28</sup> The novel was a reaction to modernism, “with specific cultural and historical situated-ness.”<sup>29</sup> As America recovered from her Civil War, and as the novel grew

as a modern storyteller, war itself was becoming less honorable in the personal experience. The imprint of violence and a new heightened “military feeling” in modern America established a new psyche with a “‘deeply grounded’ affinity for battle through its generation-old memory of the Civil War” and its “immense scale of violence and killing.”<sup>30</sup> The post-Civil War period for the U.S. became one of isolation, except for a brief period of patriotism and nationalism associated with the Spanish-American War. American audiences developed “popular American attitudes towards battle [which] reveal a certain fascination with the gruesome and destructive nature of warfare,” which one period psychologist, William James, described as “the horror makes the thrill.” This spirit may have been influenced by the immense popularity of Sir Walter Scott’s *Waverly* novels, in which the “ennobling description of combat and confrontation [becomes the] association of war with blood sport [for the] young educated men who volunteered to fight in the Spanish American War.”<sup>31</sup>

As America was forced out of isolationism, and was dragged into World War I, our servicemembers found a completely different struggle in Europe. Although news reports were gruesome from the front, it took the combatants of the war to articulate the story of the bloodiest war the civilized World had ever seen. “The carnage of the First World War made it harder thereafter for men to believe in the glory of war, and military honour would never be quite the same again.”<sup>32</sup> As Americans experienced a new reality of war, it became less clear how America became involved in something lacking honor or glory, because “modern nationalism means that people define their own personal honor in part through the honor and status of country.”<sup>33</sup> This time, the draft armies of the Allied forces were going to tell their own stories in their own words, but less as historical narrative, and more as personal stories. Modernism, which was the primary means in describing the war, is best described as a notion of William

Wordsworth's spot of time in which "a central concept with which to understand- and an optic through which to view – the proliferation of seeing alternatives to the world of modernization that either appear or, in effect the same thing, take on entirely new significance in the romantic period and especially in romantic literature."<sup>34</sup> Rather than telling stories of gallantry, chivalrous deeds, or self-sacrifice, writers were now expected and encouraged to write from their literal fighting positions. The juxtaposition is that they were truly writing from their "optic" view, just as a painter would describe in paint what he sees across the meadow on a canvas. The words were real, and translated well to American audiences who were intrigued again by a new generation in combat. In creating this new genre, writers found themselves constantly redefining their experiences and continued to restructure the novel, until the memoir-style was the most accepted form among publishers.<sup>35</sup>

Post World War I literature gave American audiences the first personal accounts directly from the battlefield, written largely as memoirs, which became the new standard. Even though most were dark and disturbing, these memoirs became increasingly popular and had an effect on the public opinion of war. Although war and stories of war have had an impact on society since rivals threw the first stone and spear, the psychological impact of these writings on modern culture was not as apparent as it was from the late 1800s until the period immediately following World War I. Just as the novel was a reaction to a modernized society, the new battlefield in WWI played a role in the change of writing from a focus on honor and glory to one of the dark reality of war. Modern weapons introduced to the battlefield created higher casualty rates and a more gruesome experience, especially to the American latecomers to an established bloody front. One ironic account, by Private Alfred McHale, describes in a 658 page memoir his constant agony in boiling water for the officers of the Royal Flying Corps.<sup>36</sup> This example reminds us

that soldiers will write about what they know and also demonstrates the depth of irony available on the front. Readers generally expect memoirs from soldiers' heroic actions on the battlefield, but the grim reality of World War I was that soldiers focused day to day on survival and not on preparation for moments of heroism. Besides poets, it generally took ten years for authors to present manuscripts for publishing, which is best exemplified by Hemingway's memoir-styled novels that took ten years to get in print. But the result of these well digested stories made them richer in content and substance.

Linked with storytellers of the novel are the great poets and poems that came out of the Western Front. Paul Fussell describes the phenomenon of great literature as a "focus on places and situations where literary tradition and real life notably transect."<sup>37</sup> The Western Front was certainly that kind of place. The bloody front immediately inspired poets and had a lasting impression on memoir writers and novelists alike, which produced irony and satire to make light of serious subjects, like Siegfried Sassoon's satirical account of a dead soldier in "The Hero."<sup>38</sup> Poetry flows from the battlefield as "every war is ironic because every war is worse than expected."<sup>39</sup> Some attempted to find a balance between humor and horror, where scenes depict "a terrible dynamic of horror, terrified tenderness, and irony,"<sup>40</sup> which is powerful because of its effect on both "mind and memory."<sup>41</sup> Although some artists, like poets, gained fame through battlefield submission, novelists emerged over time with an adapted memoir. Ernest Hemingway is a great example of this World War I generation who took the novel model and adapted a fictitious memoir to it based on his experiences.<sup>42</sup> He was so successful that his work continues to inspire readers today, even though he was no war hero himself. He created amorphous characters out of men he knew, the man he was, and the man he may have wanted to be. Although a veteran himself, he is not the man he writes about. Even though a lot of work from

World War I has been described as “anti-war,” *A Farewell to Arms* (1928) may be the best example from Hemingway that is also famously misunderstood. According to a Hemingway scholar, Hemingway’s most famous novel, written in a memoir style, was no anti war novel, “but a study of Fredrick Henry, who is himself anti-war, but the anti-war messages in the book are really a context of war.”<sup>43</sup> This novel is one of the best descriptions of the war, yet it wasn’t written until 1928, and set the standard for writing style for the World War I generation in the inter-war period. Hemingway wrote about quiet desperation through conflicted character. Hemingway was writing about life; “for the uneasing conflict between the code and the life created dramatic tension that lifted his work above mere reportage and give it the stature of art.”<sup>44</sup> Another celebrated author who served in uniform, but not in war, who earned early fame was F. Scott Fitzgerald, who wrote *This Side of Paradise* (1920), which “describes life at Princeton among the glittering, bored, and disillusioned—the post–World War I ‘lost generation.’”<sup>45</sup> Both authors’ work was dedicated to defining the character of those that served. Although unintentional, politics did begin to seep into the writing from World War I, as many experiences can be juxtaposed with the political drive behind the war itself. The writing itself, in Hemingway’s case, is not anti-war, but describes in exact detail the horror of war, which in itself can be used as an argument against war.

World War II entertainers brought back patriotic and glory filled storytelling, but they seemed to be chasing the ghosts of the great writers of World War I. Reporters sent stories by wire from the front and American audiences were keen on keeping up with ongoing battles and victories. The pattern set by early reporting in the Civil War was not broken by the distance of the front. Americans were hungry for stories about American heroes and their exploits abroad. The Pentagon News Service was dedicated to making sure Americans back home were getting



current news reels from the front, showing servicemen doing great things. Indeed, the genre of the time was to promote the great accomplishments of our deployed heroes and promote the senior leaders of the time, to include the President. This period is best described by Hollywood's ability to portray the daily life of deployed servicemen and their personal struggles. Hollywood, with the help of the Services, was able to sway public opinion and reach back to inspire a country at war using the age-old technique of stirring images of glory. One could parallel these war movies with stories of the Greek heroic tradition or the legends of the Civil War. One of the best examples of writing from this period is *The Longest Day: June 6, 1944* (1959), which, through vignettes that were often previously published in *Reader's Digest*, glorified the Allied landing at Normandy on D-Day and was easily adapted to film. True soldier heroes, like Audie Murphy, even came back to play themselves on screen in similar accounts. Although, movies, television, newspapers and record studios were riding the wave of patriotism, the great written works were yet to come.

During the years following World War II authors wrote seriously about the war and really began to find success. "One explanation is that at the precise moment when the novel seemed destined to die as a narrative, it was being transformed.... Which depended less on direct contact between the writer and his audience through the medium of shared assumptions upon his audience."<sup>46</sup> A generation of men returned from war with shared experiences who were now back to getting on with the rest of their lives. Writers could not avoid writing about the lives of those around them. Writers like Hemingway and Fitzgerald discovered the loss of values in society and "found a way of making a value of the loss itself."<sup>47</sup> The focus on loss became a common theme and was often represented by negative attitudes in characters, to include rebelliousness, disillusionment, irreverence, and mockery. One of the best examples of this style

of writer was James Jones, whose experiences during the War became the bases for a large body of work, best exemplified by *From Here to Eternity* (1951) and *The Thin Red Line* (1962).<sup>48</sup> In portraying these characters in novels, writers were “achieving a kind of art that was capable of expressing cultural disintegration without succumbing to it.”<sup>49</sup> Servicemembers seemed terribly aware that “the illusions they might have had about war – the patriotic illusions of courage and noble sacrifice – had all been lost for them that first time and long since replaced by cynicism and a conviction of the international double-cross which was sending them out to be killed.”<sup>50</sup> There was a definite break from the “Join the Army and See the World” mantra that was so popular among servicemembers during the First World War. The men of World War II suffered through a depression and saw salvation as a soldier. But the adventure was gone. Now young men signed up and disappeared. Almost every family was touched, and those who did not serve were marked as the sick and the lame. There was a new reality in a new world that was for the first time global to American readers. Writers like C.S. Lewis, who was a World War I veteran himself, were able to touch on these topics and celebrate these characters as they fought at war or as they returned home to fight new battles. Topics like religion and politics did appear in these novels, but were more as part of the main character’s journey than intended to question religion or to create anti-war sentiment. “For the second time in a century, a generation of Americans was close to the truth of war; but this time, they saw it nakedly, without illusions of romance.”<sup>51</sup> Often, the darkness of characters used in this post-war period was used by commentators to proliferate anti-war sentiment, which increased the novelist’s importance in creating opinion in the American public.<sup>52</sup>

The deployment of masses of American men created an entire new generation of writers who returned to an American audience starved for art and culture, to which these writers had

been exposed in world travel. One of the best examples of this period was the veteran of World War II, J.D. Salinger, who, while deployed, began writing essays and stories for periodicals back home. His greatest works were not solely about veterans, but encompassed his experiences abroad and his personal struggles at home, and encompassed the struggle of many. Additionally, writers who had been too poor during the depression to travel and write about their experiences were cast into a whirlwind of adventure. Servicemembers, some of whom had been away for a long time, returned from overseas "in a sense, returning exiles, more knowledgeable and less provincial than they had been."<sup>53</sup> These authors captured the essence of the Lost Generation of the Great Depression, which would eventually become known as the Greatest Generation.

Within ten years after the end of the War, publishers were in a frenzy to produce novels and were in a search for the new Hemingway or Fitzgerald. Immediately following the war, the literary establishment moved forward into a new literary age, but lacked the compliment of writers to do so. The early writers like J.D. Salinger were already breaking the mold on writing style and character, providing major competition to the Hemingway standard. The problem was that publishers were not interested in new writing, but were more interested in making a buck on the back of proven published styles. Critical commentary explains this period: "The writers were becoming rather dangerously inflated values on the literary market."<sup>54</sup> Critics and publishers alike were looking for the next Hemingway, but they limited the accepted style of writing only to imitation of the Master himself. Although there are certainly some standouts like Norman Mailer, popular novels were written in the imitation of style of the World War I writers and most writers were unable to publish more than a single book. Publishers created great fanfare for these new novels and over-inflated the value of some work, and therefore, created a gap in the originality of writing. Some, like James Jones, who may have been away at war for too long,

wrote in a detached, yet popular, style which some critics describe as having lost touch with American audiences after too many years abroad.<sup>55</sup> Of this group of writers, one critic defines the failure of each as having "been singularly deficient in the power to work up their materials out of their own creative resources and, therefore, singularly dependent upon the social scene to provide them with those materials."<sup>56</sup> Although this comment may not be all encompassing, there was certainly a situation where authors were chasing the ghosts of the great writers of the past, and were forced by greedy publishers to write about experiences that almost an entire generation could have written about. Therefore, the standouts in this new post-war period were those who could survive the test of time and produce creative and inspired work. John Aldridge's commentary on the work of young writers, like Saul Bellow, James Baldwin, Bernard Malamud, J.D. Salinger, Philip Roth and James Purdy, observed that "[they] are minting new currency of the creative imagination."<sup>57</sup>

As this Lost Generation made its transition into the Greatest Generation, the Vietnam War began to steal headlines and became the first period in our history where anti-war poetry was both hugely popular and used successfully to help in the national campaign against war. A transition occurred from writing about human experience to a commentary on the human experience as an exercise of politics. Fortunately for some, the Vietnam War came at another slow period in writing. The dime novel was more popular than ever and the western genre was opening a market for readership that had never been tapped. Like the two generations before them, the Vietnam War would bring gruesome experiences that would haunt their generation in new ways, resulting in another period of popular writing and publishing. As far as publishing was concerned, popular support for the war ultimately became so dismal that gone were the days of flag-waving and stories of personal sacrifice. As one poet described it, "War is the test of the

human spirit.”<sup>58</sup> Books were written not to tell about conquest, but how war defines the person. The early works following the Vietnam War were mainly anti-war writings. Military authors required time to digest their experiences and wait for audiences and publishers to be open to the subject matter, with most successful works published almost three decades after the end of the war.<sup>59</sup>

Even though the memoir continued to be the standard soldiers returning from the front used to tell their stories, there is a significant difference in the writing of the 1860s and the 1960s. The experience of combat hadn't changed, but the way in which authors described war was dramatically different. In the most simplistic terms, while soldiers from the Civil War wrote about how their experiences contributed to the war effort, Vietnam era authors focused on defining the role of war in their lives. These experiences often invoke sympathy, rather than admiration. In describing the writing of this period, one critic comments that “war is a test of the human spirit – which is pretty much gone in American poetry, but is still very much alive in the film industry, perpetuated by our government, and, of course, other countries.”<sup>60</sup> Publishers encouraged writers to define war for themselves, and American audiences were again intrigued by these new stories from the front, and the new American experience of men forced to go to war. It is common, based on novels and movies of the period, to believe that this new generation of combatants was forced into war, which is an extreme juxtaposition from the Spanish American War, and literature reflected that sentiment. The truth is that two thirds of the troops engaged in combat in Vietnam were volunteers and that opened a unique opportunity for a draft military.<sup>61</sup> That one third allowed for many to experience the realities of war first hand who normally wouldn't have. These weren't all poets and artists, but the experience of combat changed the warrior spirit that had been the symbol of the American Serviceman in previous

wars. The character of this experience generated a great renaissance of anti-war writing.<sup>62</sup> This revolution of writing was not ignored by publishers, who helped fuel the media machine themselves, and was embraced by the American public, establishing a new genre in describing war for that generation.

With a decade of anti-war writing gone by, there was a break in the popularity of memoir writing during the eighties. Although our military continued to be engaged around the globe, popular writing about the military transitioned to stories about espionage, counter-espionage and futuristic writing. This era was inspired by the Cold War and the resulting arms race. The best example of the eighties is Tom Clancy, who became the superstar of the fictitious memoir. Everything he wrote became a bestseller, as he was able to satisfy the American thirst for storytelling by soldiers about war.<sup>63</sup> The writing was believable and accurate, and he often collaborated with the military's top generals and/or subject matter experts. With this high level assistance, Clancy was able to get inside the information loop of the DOD and combined modern tactics and procedures to write patriotic stories. American audiences learned more about the capabilities of our U.S. military through Clancy, and other writers wanted to be Clancy. Publishers were unwilling to take a chance on green military writers, who were so often able to articulate unit histories and maneuvers, but lacked the storytelling appeal of more tested authors. So it became a standard for military writers to co-author books with experienced writers like Clancy.<sup>64</sup>

Operation Desert Storm occurred during a period of stale writing and allowed a great opportunity for new authors from the military to appear. The best example of writing from this conflict was *Into the Storm* (1997), by Tom Clancy with General Fred Franks. Publishers piggy-backed on Clancy's popularity and his friendship with General Franks as a way to create a

lasting memoir that covered combat from Vietnam to the Gulf War. This memoir is important because it bridges the gap of the inter-war years between Vietnam and the Gulf War and detailed the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war. Clancy was able to harness General Franks' ability to tell the story of the soldier. Another unique story from the front that set the standard for future publishing was Rhonda Cornum's memoir, *She Went to War* (1992). Cornum's success was driven largely by the novelty of her story and exploited American readers' fascination with her as a U.S. female prisoner of war. The success of these books is based on their authority. One was written by an established best-selling author in conjunction with a likeable top general. The second is a story of a woman who went through the experience of being the first female prisoner of war in the Middle East, told by Peter Copeland, a Pentagon correspondent. The popularity of both was not diminished by the storytelling that today would have been done by the media. There was no embedded media in the Gulf War, and American audiences largely had to wait for their morning newspapers or news programs to catch up on the events in the Gulf. Had today's media machine been alive and well during the Gulf War, these stories probably would have been told live, leaving little option for publishers who are always looking for a fresh angle. When I queried Brigadier General (BG) Cornum on the timing of her writing and any effect modern blogging may have had on the popularity and importance of her story, she dismissed the idea and commented that, "Blogging is like any email upon which there is no quality control and you get what someone wants to say- regardless of truth, quality, value- or other."<sup>65</sup> Truly, her story was so unique that even when she was overwhelmed by a media frenzy, her story was still relevant and important to get out in a memoir form. The media attention just added to the success of her memoir. General Franks on the other hand, commented, "The current challenge as I see it is that historians have abdicated writing history to

journalists and bloggers.”<sup>66</sup> His comments suggest the shift in soldiers telling their own stories through history and giving the task over to the media, who have somehow been legitimized as the official storytellers of the DOD. Although different in style and content, both books are examples of a departure from the Vietnam era writing, as they are both patriotic and inspiring.

The combination of the lingering sentiment of the anti-war writing of the Vietnam era, the First Amendment, twenty-four hour news and information sources, and the phenomenon of blogging has caused the loss of well developed and stylistic writing that has been typical of poets and storytellers returning from war. With a vacuum in memoirs on the market, it has opened the door to journalists who have publishers and advertisers behind them to compete for headlines because they are either anti-military, anti-war, or have some other talent that will be of interest to the short attention span of American audiences. Although writing following war may be dark, which is best demonstrated by the poets following the First World War, we are currently seeing a similar trait among introspective authors at war today who can grab the attention of and make an impact on American audiences’ hearts and minds. Just as the novel was a reaction to the modernizing world of World War I, current writing reacts to the technology of today’s world. Modern day heroes have just found a different way to tell their stories, and it is all about the speed with which they can tell it. They are not waiting ten years to develop the stories about their changed lives and broken souls, but are willing to share those in real time, and sometimes, accompanied by video. Just as Americans craved news and descriptions from the front in the American Revolution and the Civil War, today’s audiences are starved for first hand experience, but are unwilling to wait. News and stories are now transmitted as part of our modern social networking systems and communication dependence on computers. This revolution in writing, the desire of American audiences for instant gratification, and the developing ability through



technology to post (sometimes) live footage from the front, has changed the way modern storytellers are telling their story. Even more important is BG Cornum's comment that these new media are not authoritative in nature and can be written by anyone, and what they say may not even be valid or relevant. Although there have been a number of memoirs written seemingly from the bunkers of this war, the Global War in Terror is less than a decade old. The Vietnam era writers were allowed over thirty years, in some cases, to tell their stories; publishers today aren't giving writers the chance to digest their experiences and present them in well developed and carefully written memoirs.<sup>67</sup>

### **Modern Storytelling**

The concern for the future of publishing is whether or not American audiences can enjoy the experience in the traditional memoir form. As of 2005, book sales about war, memoirs, were at an historic low.<sup>68</sup> From an industry stand-point, there was a similarity between the phenomenon of music sales becoming digital and the use of digital news and information from the internet. News agencies, which were embedded with units, were able to deliver the warrior's story before servicemembers could even get letters home. Therefore, the American public has become comfortable with the news agencies telling the stories. Obviously, there is some bias with news agencies having complete autonomy in telling the stories for our warriors. Publishers, between 2001 and 2005, were unable to keep up with the overnight media machine controlled by the news agencies. Even the splash of books about the early days of war in Iraq and Afghanistan were either written by, or co-written by, journalists. This departure is a significant change of form by which to tell the soldiers experience of war.

The immediacy, associated with our twenty four hour news culture, is what satisfies the appetites of American audiences, despite any slant that the media may give. In late 2005, my

publisher asked me to consult with them on a military line of books. I went back and researched popular stories through the last few conflicts and focused on the stories of those who wrote in the traditional memoir style. I found some quite unique stories among my peers, which would make headlines and satisfy the American desire for stories of unique situations at war. As an example, I offered the memoir of the first female amputee from combat operations. It would be an incredible story about a young woman at war, one which would also allow for headlines and discussions about women's role in combat and their location on the battlefield. It was made clear to me by my publisher, who specializes in political and military books, that they were uninterested in producing any more military books because they are unable to compete with the volume of stories and information transmitted online, or as a byproduct of stories online.<sup>69</sup> One of the problems was that some of the early books on the war, which were produced in haste, were simply not good and did not effectively reconstruct the war, which was easier to view on television or the internet. The result was audiences turning away from military writers about the war, to journalists and online accounts.

The cultural change in method for passing information in this war is the advent and popularity of the Blog. The definition of a Blog, according to Dictionary.com "is an online diary; a personal chronological log of thoughts published on a Web page; also called weblog." To "blog" became an accepted term, in 1998, to define web-logging, or posting journal entries on web pages for public review and the words "web" and "log" combine in accepted slang, "blog." Blogging has seen unprecedented growth in our culture, especially within the Armed Forces. Blogging is "egalitarian, in that anyone can set up a website."<sup>70</sup> But not all blogs are equal, and the market of blogging websites is really beyond comprehension in its growth and popularity. "A study by Nardi et al (2004) identifies five major motivations for blogging:

documenting the author's life and experiences, expressing opinions and commentary, venting strong emotion, working out ideas in writing, and forming and/or maintaining virtual communities."<sup>71</sup> The problem is that the only credibility of blogs is the bloggers themselves. Blog entries are not required to be accurate or even truthful, and are often a way for frustrated servicemembers not in the fight to share personal opinions that are of the few, but translate to the many. Even if they associate themselves by hyperlinks with a number of valid and relevant websites, which is also subjective, they gain credibility, since "blog influence can be affected by the structure of the blogosphere, in particular the hyperlinks connecting one blog to another."<sup>72</sup> These connections can reach over 35 million weblogs, which continue to expand, having doubled every six months between 2003 and 2006.<sup>73</sup> But the trouble came when these blogs went beyond social networks and became media and entertainment outlets for many Americans. Some publishers have even gone forward with publishing large portions of blogs as memoirs. But just as news outlets tried to use blogs as relevant news references, they were incorrect, and the result has come to be known as "Memogate."<sup>74</sup> (Memogate refers to events on 8 September 2007, when 60 Minutes reported a false memo regarding President Bush's attempt to avoid military service using family connections) Despite its use by the modern public as an information source, media outlets, even though they continue to maintain and sponsor blog sites, have rarely used information gained from blogs. But through news agencies and through sponsored or associated blogs, our deployed servicemembers used these social networking sites to tell their stories from the front, and they have become relevant and important.

Although initially resistant, the DOD has totally accepted blogging as an Information Operation, and have coined their own style, known as Milblogging, with Servicemembers known as Milbloggers. As blogs emerged during the course of this long war in Iraq and Afghanistan,

DOD had no choice but to embrace the phenomenon. In 2003, the Army ordered its soldiers to cease and desist the use of weblogging or any other social networks that would allow unedited or unapproved entries about military operations. To control this order, most units allowed only the transmission of email and journaling through dot-mil websites. The concerns were the traditional operational security concerns with information: "security, accuracy, policy, or propriety."<sup>75</sup> Obviously, servicemembers deserved the right to communicate their war experiences to family and friends back home. With the advent of the blog, servicemembers were able to tell much more than the military was ready to have aired publicly. But after having watched the invasion into Baghdad on television and the internet, these blogs again satisfied the intense desire and thirst for up to the minute "reporting," but with a global reach, and written by servicemembers in the field. Similar to the reasons for civilian blogging, there are five reasons the military blog: family contact, correcting news inaccuracies, sharing tactics/techniques/procedures, provide an artistic outlet, or to vent."<sup>76</sup> According to an Army Public Affairs officer, "Previous generations of Soldiers wrote diaries or traded stories over a drink as a means of catharsis and retrospection, but many modern Soldiers prefer the electronic forum that can be simultaneously anonymous and public."<sup>77</sup> Even in the 2001 Army Field Manual 3-0, *Operations*, the Army's position is clear on the advantage of sharing the message globally at all levels: "Information disseminated through public affairs counters the effects of propaganda and misinformation."<sup>78</sup> The risk of embarrassment is worth getting the larger message abroad: "The Army position should be that we seek to protect operational security and individual privacy, but we have nothing to hide and much to communicate, and we comprise over a million uniformed individuals with over a million perspectives."<sup>79</sup> In this writer's view,

the Army's position should be the World's, namely, that blogs are a great way to send messages and share stories, but they are just messages.

The best example of the hybrid ability of a blog to entertain, inform, and provide a true open forum is Garry Trudeau's (Doonesbury) approved Milblog, *The Sandbox*. The blog describes itself as "GWOT Hotwash, Straight from the Wire." Its "focus is not on policy and partisanship (go to our Blowback page for that), but on the unclassified details of deployment -- the everyday, the extraordinary, the wonderful, the messed-up, the absurd."<sup>80</sup> In a recent interview with Garry, I asked him about his blog and its purpose. Specifically, the blog helps Garry more accurately depict his characters who find themselves at war. He gave me the example of the ability to get information from the front and how it has changed from the Gulf War when it took him anywhere from eight days to two weeks.<sup>81</sup> *The Sandbox* blog is almost instantaneous. He has had that instant access now for three years and has not had a single violation of operational security. Additionally, the site has become a great resource and a way to relax for many. When I questioned him about its role as a narrative, he responded:

I would say that blogging has not replaced traditional war narratives; it merely supplements them. It provides personal insight and detail on the granular level, and historians will draw on them just as they have from handwritten letters from past wars. The main difference is that the writer is more self-conscious (for better or worse), because the web creates a wider audience for his thoughts. He's usually hoping for feedback, maybe approbation or at least validation for his efforts. So he has the sense of being an actor that he's performing in a way he wasn't when he was just writing home to Mom."<sup>82</sup>

Trudeau's comments validate the blog as merely a message and a portion of a very raw narrative, even when they are artistic and/or useful to a greater population.

Great writing is not dead or a thing we'll have to look to the past to find. Blogs are not likely to last as an art form, but blogs will be remembered as important chronicles of the longest all-volunteer conflict in our history. Blogging has also enabled poets to send poetry from the front. Poetry is the one example that allows the art to stay true to its form. Blogging of poetry

doesn't interfere with the essence of poetry, which is both self-narrative and personal and is in direct contrast to the use of blog entries collected and processed into memoir-like editions. Poems are reactions to the present and memoirs are personal reactions to events over time. American audiences must be patient and wait for memoirs to develop in the great minds of our current warriors. The reaction may be as simple as LTG Moore and Joseph Galloway, who finally penned the bestseller *We Were Soldiers Once and Young* (1992). Although it was published almost thirty years after the Battle of Ia Drang, and on the heels of the Gulf War, Moore describes in his prologue: "This story is about time and memories."<sup>83</sup> Unlike the large body of work that defines the writers of his generation, his memoir transcends politics and returns to the traditional style of World War I, where the hell of War is offered as a reminder and to celebrate the great things that our sons will do for their Country. LTG Moore is famous for his mantra, "Hate war, but love the American Soldier."

## **Conclusion**

Today it may be easier to sway American audiences with the current information flow compared to the WWII controlled media. The change in process has made a dramatic effect on the way reporters, whether paid journalist or free-lance bloggers in uniform, paint the image of war. As it is raw, unprocessed, and often inaccurate, blogging is not likely to last, but has left an indelible footprint on the history of the current war. The pressure of instant reporting has diluted the product, and to make headlines these days, inaccuracies and poor writing are excused in an effort to be first or controversial. Memoirs from the front are no longer stories for entertainment, but have become news reports, and the American public is in a constant frenzy for immediate information from the source. But the great novels and memoirs from our generation have yet to be written or have been written and not been published. Their writings will be critical, because,

just as the early writers of the feudal societies wrote about the great deeds of their knights, the relevance of writing at war is valuable in informing about successes and failures and for inspiring people, especially in today's world of global reach.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth L. Robbins (MAJ, USA). *Muddy Boots IO: The Rise of Soldier Blogs*. (Military Review: SEP/OCT 2007; 87, 5; Research Library), 111.

<sup>2</sup> Two examples relevant to this paper are two anti-war blogs:

<http://www.blogger.com/profile/09828181223446725306> and [www.poetsagainsthewar.com](http://www.poetsagainsthewar.com)

<sup>3</sup> Colby Buzzell. *My War: Killing Time in Iraq*. (New York: Putnam Adult, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> As an early reader, I mainly read fiction that was associated with war, and especially the Vietnam War. As I began to read beyond pleasure reading, my focus for early studies included a number of biographies, which I have gone back to over the years, to include Washington, Nathaniel Greene, Andrew Jackson, Robert E. Lee, Nathan Bedford Forrest, Patton, Eisenhower, Churchill, Rommel, and Hitler. Since joining the Army, I have refocused my reading on unit histories, especially of Armor units, from *Treat 'em Rough! The Birth of American Armor 1917-1920* to *Black Knights: On the Bloody Road to Baghdad*.

<sup>5</sup> Cornelius Ryan. *The Longest Day: June 6, 1944*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959), 9.

<sup>6</sup> The earliest examples of these great works are *Canterbury Tales* (Chaucer, late 14<sup>th</sup> Century) and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Late 14<sup>th</sup> Century). *Canterbury Tales* was written as a political response in order to support the crusades. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* as an alliterative romance that was written anonymously, but likely by a warrior as a way to highlight the great deeds of men under arms. Both had a particular effect on their audiences and are great romance examples from this period.

<sup>7</sup> Jeffrey E. McFadden. "Chivalry and the Military Officer: An Historical and Literary Inquiry." (USNA, Maryland: Trident Scholar Project Report; no. 98, 1979), 12.

<sup>8</sup> McFadden, 15.

<sup>9</sup> McFadden, 15.

<sup>10</sup> McFadden, 20.

<sup>11</sup> McFadden, 26, draws from literature and defines the following as "Knightly Virtues": courtesy, gentle heart, call to adventure, loyalty, prowess, honor, personal concern for subordinates, sparing one another in battle, and the ability to avoid condemned practices (vain glory, malicious intent, slaying of a naked man, betraying a knight, and doing battle while betraying a wounded knight).

<sup>12</sup> McFadden, 30.

<sup>13</sup> Paul Robinson. *Military Honour and the Conduct of War*. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 5.

<sup>14</sup> Robinson, 115.

<sup>15</sup> Robinson, 115.

<sup>16</sup> John A. Lynn. *The Bayonets of the Republic: Motivation and Tactics in the Army of the Revolutionary France, 1791-94*. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 185.

<sup>17</sup> Lynn, 185.

<sup>18</sup> Roberts, Giselle. *The Confederate Belle*. (Columbia, Missouri: MHS Press, 2003), 3.

<sup>19</sup> Roberts, 43.

<sup>20</sup> John Pettegrew. 'The Soldier's Faith': Turn-of-the-century Memory of the Civil War and the Emergence of Modern American Nationalism. (Sage Publications, Journal of Contemporary History. Vol. 31, NO. 1 (JAN 1996), PP. 49-73), 53.

<sup>21</sup> Pettegrew, 55.

<sup>22</sup> Pettegrew, 57.

<sup>23</sup> Pettegrew, 58.

<sup>24</sup> Pettegrew, 59.

<sup>25</sup> Pettegrew, 61.

<sup>26</sup> Pettegrew, 51.

<sup>27</sup> Pettegrew, 51.

<sup>28</sup> Saree Makdisi. *Romantic Imperialism*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 8.

<sup>29</sup> Makdisi, 10.

<sup>30</sup> Pettegrew, 49.

<sup>31</sup> Pettegrew, 52.

<sup>32</sup> Robinson, 164.

<sup>33</sup> Robinson, 168.

<sup>34</sup> Makdisi, 12.



- <sup>35</sup> John W. Aldridge. *The Devil in the Fire: Retrospective Essays on American Literature and Culture*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), 3.
- <sup>36</sup> Paul Fussell. *The Great War and Modern Memory*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 30.
- <sup>37</sup> Fussell, Preface IX.
- <sup>38</sup> Fussell, 7.
- <sup>39</sup> Fussell, 7.
- <sup>40</sup> Fussell, 34.
- <sup>41</sup> Fussell, 35.
- <sup>42</sup> The selection of Hemingway over a number of other celebrated authors is based on Hemingway's service overseas and his specific treatment of World War I in novels, discussed in the following paragraphs.
- <sup>43</sup> James Meredith, Alex Vernon, and Kayla Williams. Hosted Panel discussion of *A Farewell to Arms*, by Ernest Hemingway. By Diane Rehm, "The Diane Rehm Show" on NPR, 20 Aug
- <sup>44</sup> Aldridge, 6.
- <sup>45</sup> Matthew J. Bruccoli. "A Brief Life of Fitzgerald" F. Scott Fitzgerald: A Life in Letters. (New York: Scribners, 1994.); essay reprinted courtesy of Simon & Schuster: <http://www.sc.edu/fitzgerald/biography.html>
- <sup>46</sup> Aldridge, 3.
- <sup>47</sup> Aldridge, 4.
- <sup>48</sup> "His first novel, *From Here to Eternity* (Scribner's, 1951), based on his experiences in the peacetime Army, won the National Book Award. That was later followed by *The Thin Red Line* (Scribner's, 1962), set on Guadalcanal, and the final installment in his war trilogy." By William J. Felchner. James Jones: World War II Writer, From Here to Eternity Author's Experiences Forged in U.S. Army. [http://ww2history.suite101.com/article.cfm/james\\_jones\\_and\\_world\\_war\\_ii](http://ww2history.suite101.com/article.cfm/james_jones_and_world_war_ii)
- <sup>49</sup> Aldridge, 5.
- <sup>50</sup> Aldridge, 9.
- <sup>51</sup> Aldridge, 12.
- <sup>52</sup> James Meredith, Alex Vernon, and Kayla Williams. Hosted Panel discussion of *A Farewell to Arms*, by Ernest Hemingway. By Diane Rehm, "The Diane Rehm Show" on NPR, 20 Aug 08, <http://www.wamu.org/programs/dr/>. As part of the discussion about Hemingway, the period of writing was discussed, specific to subjects of desperate times and propaganda. Scribner specifically advertized this book as an anti-war memoir as a way to add to the publicity and interest among readers. Fitzgerald's novels were given the same treatment by Scribner.
- <sup>53</sup> Aldridge, 12.
- <sup>54</sup> Aldridge, 73.
- <sup>55</sup> Aldridge, 74.
- <sup>56</sup> Aldridge, 76.
- <sup>57</sup> Aldridge, 79.
- <sup>58</sup> Robert Hedin. Interview by Jennifer Ludden, "All Things Considered" on NPR, 22 Aug 04.
- <sup>59</sup> Popular works from the anti-war movement, still used in classrooms today:  
Dean Albertson, ed., *Rebels or Revolutionaries? Student Movements of the 1960's*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1975.  
Bill Ayers, *Fugitive Days: A Memoir*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2001.  
Lynn Z. Bloom, *Doctor Spock: Biography of a Conservative Radical*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1972.  
Sam Brown and Len Ackland, eds., *Why are We Still in Vietnam?* New York: Random House, 1970.  
Noam Chomsky, *For Reasons of State*. New York: Vintage, 1973.  
William Sloane Coffin, Jr., *Once To Every Man: A Memoir*. New York: Atheneum, 1977.  
David Cortright, *Soldiers in Revolt*. New York: Doubleday, 1975.  
Lucinda Franks, *Waiting Out a War: The Exile of Private John Picciano*. New York: Coward, McCann, & Geoghegan, 1974.  
John K. Galbraith, *How to Get Out of Vietnam*. New York: Signet, 1967.  
Felix Greene, *Vietnam! Vietnam!* Palo Alto, CA: Fulton, 1966.  
Philip Jones Griffiths, *Vietnam Inc.* New York: Collier, 1971.  
David Halberstam, *The Unfinished Odyssey of Robert Kennedy*. New York: Random House, 1968.  
Alice Lynd, ed., *We Won't Go: Personal Accounts of War Objectors*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1968.  
Norman Mailer, *The Armies of the Night*. New York: New American Library, 1968.

Susan Sontag, *Trip to Hanoi*. New York: Noonday (Farrar, Straus and Giroux), 1968.

<http://www.clemson.edu/caah/history/facultypages/EdMoise/antiwar.html>

Popular works produced by military authors, who waited thirty years or more:

Phili Caputo. *A Rumor of War*. Owl Books, 1996.

John M. Del Vecchio. *The 13<sup>th</sup> Valley*. St. Martin's Griffin, 1999.

Frederick Downs, Jr. *The Killing Zone*. W.W. Norton, 1993.

Moore, Harold G. (Lt.Gen., Ret.) and Joseph Galloway. *We Were Soldiers Once and Young*. Random House, 1992.

Michael Herr. *Dispatches*. Vintage Books, 1991.

Tim O'Brien. *The Things They Carried*. Broadway, 1998.

John L. Plaster. *SOG: The Secret Wars of America's Commandos in Vietnam*. ONYX Division of Penguin Books, 1997.

Christopher Ronnau. *Blood Trails*. 2006.

James Webb. *Fields of Fire*. Putnam, 2001.

<sup>60</sup> Herdin.

<sup>61</sup> Estimate based on Veteran's Administration ([www.va.gov/vetdata](http://www.va.gov/vetdata)) and Selective Services ([www.sss.gov/induct.htm](http://www.sss.gov/induct.htm))

<sup>62</sup> Herdin.

<sup>63</sup> Examples of Clancy's Bestseller's, just during the 1980s include: *The Hunt for Red October* (1984), *Red Storm Rising* (1986) (with Larry Bond), *Patriot Games* (1987), *Cardinal of the Kremlin* (1988), and *Clear and Present Danger* (1989).

<sup>64</sup> Examples from the Commander series include: *Into the Storm: A Study in Command* (1997) (with General Fred Franks), *Every Man a Tiger* (1999) (with General Charles Horner), *Shadow Warriors: Inside the Special Forces* (2002) (with General Carl Stiner), and *Battle Ready* (2004) (with General Tony Zinni).

<sup>65</sup> Cornum.

<sup>66</sup> Franks.

<sup>67</sup> At the request of my publisher, I wrote my memoir *Back In Action* in less than six months. It was available for sale in eight months from contracting. Although it was a New York Times Bestseller and I have received some critical acclaim, it is an unfinished work. I would have preferred to tell the entire story, to include returning to Iraq and the emotions of returning to the Iraq War. The historic note of my life is not so much that I returned to duty as an amputee, but that I returned to combat, as the title suggests. My publisher was in a race against time, both for unique subject matter and the fact that book houses across the country were about to flood the market with the first of the Operation Iraqi Freedom books. *Back In Action* beat the others, and made global headlines, but is an unfinished work. I believe that many of the award-winning memoirs I have read lately are incomplete as well. Due to professional courtesy, I will only remark specifically on my own title. For me, it was more about getting the message out than making money or headlines.

<sup>68</sup> Carneal.

<sup>69</sup> Carneal.

<sup>70</sup> James B. Kinniburgh (MAJ, USAF) and Dr. Dorothy E. Denning. *Blogs and Military Information Strategy*. (IO Sphere, Joint Information Operations Center, Summer 2006), 5.

<sup>71</sup> Kinniburgh, 6.

<sup>72</sup> Kinniburgh, 6.

<sup>73</sup> Kinniburgh, 6.

<sup>74</sup> Kinniburgh, 7.

<sup>75</sup> Robbins, 114.

<sup>76</sup> Robbins, 110.

<sup>77</sup> Robbins, 110.

<sup>78</sup> Robbins, 111.

<sup>79</sup> Robbins, 112.

<sup>80</sup> [http://gocomics.typepad.com/the\\_sandbox/](http://gocomics.typepad.com/the_sandbox/)

<sup>81</sup> Trudeau.

<sup>82</sup> Trudeau.

<sup>83</sup> Lt.Gen. Harold G. Moore (Ret.) and Joseph Galloway. *We Were Soldiers Once and Young*. (New York: Random House, 1992), xvii.

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